



# LEAGUE OF MICHIGAN BICYCLISTS

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Madam Chairperson, Honored Committee members, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 4781, 4782, and 4783. Thank you Madam Chairperson for your leadership on this issue as one of the primary sponsors.

My name is John Lindenmayer and I serve as the Executive Director for the League of Michigan Bicyclists. Our mission is to promote bicycling and the safety of bicyclists on Michigan roadways. Our membership is comprised of individual cyclists, bicycle shops, clubs, organizations, and event organizers. Ultimately, we represent the interests of anyone who bicycles in our state. The outdoor industry estimates that there are two million cyclists in Michigan. These bicyclists contribute an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefit to our state's economy according to a recent MDOT study.

With the rapid growth of e-bikes, coupled by common sense regulations as outlined in these bills, we hope to see even more cyclists in our state in the coming years, which in turn will contribute further to our state's tourism sector.

Despite being the fastest growing sector of the bicycling industry, e-bikes currently are not classified under Michigan law. This causes confusion among retailers, e-bike users, law enforcement, and land managers. Michigan law simply has not kept up with the technology. Lacking a clear definition, law enforcement currently lumps e-bikes with mopeds simply because they have a motor. This means the argument can be made that they are technically not allowed on any non-motorized facility including on-road bike lanes or trails.

In Michigan a moped is defined as "A two- or three-wheeled vehicle with a motor which has no more than 50cc piston displacement producing two brake horsepower or less." This definition does not fit e-bikes which lack pistons entirely and do not operate like mopeds, scooters, or other motorized vehicles. They truly most closely resemble traditional bicycles in both appearance and operation.

Over the past two years, LMB helped to engage diverse stakeholders to build consensus around the bill package before you. This inclusive outreach included the bicycle industry and retail representatives at the national and local level, various trails organizations, environmental groups, state agencies like MDOT, DNR, and MSP, and representatives of local units of government from Michigan Municipal League and Michigan Townships Association down to local elected officials, and many others.

Part of this outreach included a series of e-bike demonstrations. In May, we hosted a demonstration specifically for lawmakers at the Capitol that I hope many of you had the opportunity to participate in. Upon returning from test rides, the common response is three fold: 1) "That was so much fun," coupled with big smiles. Participants are quick to reminisce about the joys of riding a bike as a youth; 2) "That's not at all what I expected an e-bike to be like;" and 3) "I don't see why these would pose any problem on the roads or trails." Participants are quick to acknowledge that e-bikes are very similar to traditional bikes and thus should be treated as such.

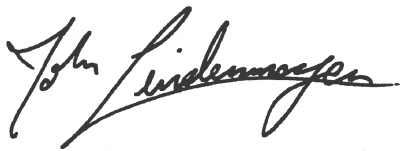
E-bikes help overcome barriers to cycling such as distance, age, and disability. LMB hosts bicycle tours that attract cyclists from across the country. We started receiving calls a couple years ago asking if we allowed e-bikes. We have embraced them as they allow people to participate who otherwise couldn't or wouldn't.

Additionally, studies show that crashes and serious injuries tend to decrease as the number of cyclists in a community increase. With safety in numbers in mind, e-bikes offer not only new opportunities for recreation and tourism, retail, and increased physical fitness, but they also have the potential to help improve overall safety on our roads by increasing ridership.

The major bicycle manufactures have coalesced around building e-bikes that meet the three-class system outlined HB Bill 4782. This class system has recently been codified into law in Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Tennessee, and Utah. Similar legislation is currently being advanced in Arizona, Connecticut, Ohio, New York, and Wisconsin. It is worth noting that, Michigan's legislation is unique in that it offers even more local control than other states, allowing communities and land use managers to be more or less restrictive with e-bike regulations, specifically on trails.

In closing, I'd like to thank the committee once again for the opportunity to testify and urge your swift action in support of this package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Lindenmayer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Lindenmayer" clearly legible.

John Lindenmayer  
Executive Director  
League of Michigan Bicyclists